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REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed on August 25, 2004 wherein Claims 1-16 were rejected. Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 11-14, and 16 have been amended and Claim 17 has been added. Claims 1-17 remain pending.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 112

On page 2 of the Office Action, Claims 11 and 14 were rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicants have amended Claims 11 and 14 to address the clarity rejection.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 102 and 103

On page 2 of the Office Action Claims 6-11 were rejected under 35 USC §102 as being anticipated by Ule. On page 3 of the Office Action Claims 1-5 and 12-16 were rejected under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over Ule in view of Shiraishi. Applicants have amended the claims to better describe the present invention as including a variable displacement engine. A variable displacement engine operates in a partially displaced operating mode under low load conditions and a fully displaced operating mode under relatively higher load conditions. Air flow is substantially prevented through the deactivated cylinders to reduce throttling losses from the throttle plate positioning. Ule is completely silent with respect to any type of variable displacement engine. Ule does not teach or suggest the present invention.

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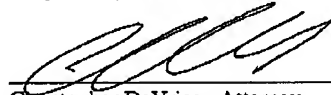
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Conclusion

The entire Office Action dated August 25, 2004 has been carefully reviewed, and this response is submitted as being fully responsive thereto. In view of the preceding remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-17 are in condition for allowance and respectfully request such action at the Examiner's earliest convenience. If the Examiner believes that personal contact would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, he is requested to call the undersigned at his earliest convenience.

Please charge any fees which may be due, to Deposit Account No. 07-0960.

Respectfully submitted,



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